

PRAIRIE SPIRIT UNITED CHURCH



P.S. NEWS February 2021

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Thanks to all the Church congregations who helped make Just a Warm Sleep a reality this **January, 2021.**



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					15 Harrow United Church Meal & Breakfast	16 Prairie Spirit United Church
17 Prairie Spirit United Church	18 Grey Street United Church	19 Grey Street United Church	20 St. Andrews River Heights United	21 St. Andrews River Heights United	22 Trinity United Church	23 St. Andrews River Heights United
24 St. Andrews River Heights United	25 Sargent Ave. Menno-Church	26 Sargent Ave. Menno-Church	27 West Minister United	28 West Minister United	29 Benevity Community Impact Fund	30 Immanuel United W/ Meals & Breakfast From
31 Lilly field United With Meals						

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MINISTER'S THOUGHTS

In just a few weeks we will be entering the season of Lent. It's a unique and familiar season of the church year. It is traditionally a time for introspection and penitence, a time to think about our faith and spiritual practice. Most of us remember "fasting from" (giving up) something pleasurable during Lent as a means to well I admit I was never clear about the purpose or outcome of the self denial.

In more recent times Lent has been a time for study and deepening our understanding and practice of faith. The Lenten gospel readings tend to be about Jesus' interactions with the disciples who don't understand or don't agree with his mission, or religious leaders who feel threatened by his message and want to discredit him in the eyes of the people or the tradition.

Last year we studied Jesus parables and the study went longer than Lent because we were in the first stages of lockdown. This year we are looking at starting the Lenten study on Zoom, the week of February 22. I'd like to know if there is a preference for a biblical study or something a little more personal or topical, and whether there is a preference for an afternoon time (Last year was designed as a lunchtime study) or if evening is more convenient for a majority of our members?

However we decide to study lent, we will be starting off with a zoom gathering on Ash Wednesday February 17th to look at the history of Ash Wednesday and discuss its significance for us today. Watch for details in upcoming days.

Last year at this time we had no idea what impact the Corona virus would have on all our lives. This year is a time to reflect on how we have changed and what we have learned. However we mark the season of Lent, we have been changed in many ways.

Paul DuVal

OVERSIGHT COUNCIL

What costs are there to run our church during COVID 19?

Some of you may believe that costs to run the church are much less since we haven't had in person services since late March, 2020. At the Oversight Council meeting on January 30th, we began to review the proposed budget for 2021. While some costs are lower, others are higher and we may well be looking at a deficit budget at our Annual Meeting. This concerns everyone on Council. A brief review of the cost of running a church is below:

- **Staff:** we continue to need staff to support our community of faith and offer weekly services. In fact, we are needing more support behind the scenes with the technical delivery of services and that is an additional cost at this time of closure.
- **Building:** as you know having likely been a home owner, buildings require maintenance at all times. Members of our Property team do many jobs around the church to keep costs down but larger projects require professional support. Dennis Bitton has a detailed report on the replacement of our heating and ventilation equipment in this newsletter. A cost we had built up savings for, but a big hit to our building fund. We have some projects that need to be addressed on the horizon: safety hazard on the front sidewalk, insulation in the office area and door security. These are 3 projects for this year.
- **Insurance:** costs for insurance are going up everywhere due to natural disasters around the world. The insurance company has said that our yearly cost to insure the building will likely increase by 35 percent this year.
- **Utilities:** the cost of heating, air conditioning and water consumption is down but a comfortable temperature must be maintained for staff and minimum temperature to keep the building functional. These monthly bills continue to come in.
- **Rentals and Fund Raisers:** Income from rentals is greatly reduced due to COVID restrictions and we have not been able to have any "in-person" fundraisers. There will be the plant fundraiser sponsored by Social Justice Team with proceeds going to our outreach projects. We are thinking of other creative ideas for fundraisers that do not require us to be together!

Our church home is just like our family home! It requires ongoing care and maintenance and our church family continues to need the leadership and inspiration at these difficult times from our minister and staff. Costs are ongoing whether we are open or closed to COVID. We ask that you prayerfully consider your contributions to PSUC at the start of the 2021 year.

In closing, last month I spoke about the need for sharing of our time and talents in support of our community of faith; in particular the need for leadership on key roles on the Oversight Council. This month, I have focussed on our fiscal needs. Just as within a family, each of us have a responsibility to share our time, talents and resources to build a thriving congregation!

Respectfully submitted by
 Joycelyn Fournier-Gawryluk
 Chairperson, Oversight Council

Zoom Coffee Time

The Oversight Council is thinking of creative ways to keep folks connected! There are two opportunities for Zoom Coffee Conversation! They are:

- Sunday after the church service.
- Wednesday, February 10 at 10:00 a.m. – Dennis Bitton will be hosting this conversation. Fill your coffee or tea cup and join in the conversation!

In order to participate in either of these times, please advise Sherri Van Aert in the Office and she will provide you with the Zoom link.

SEARCH TEAM

Search Team Members

Shaun Cross
 Deb McAlpine

Fran Ferguson
 John McLeod

Val Goodridge
 Thomas Ormonde

The Search Team continues to make progress. While we certainly would love to have more definitive news regarding the search for a permanent minister, we accept that important decisions such as this one, take: time, patience, collaboration, and faith. In addition to exploring for a permanent minister, we are identifying and discussing potential ministers who might join Prairie Spirit to fill the 1/2 time ministerial Gap position. Stay tuned...

PROPERTY TEAM

Property Team Members

Dennis Bitton (Team Lead))
Bob Bilesky

Don Orchyk,
Randy Palmer

Jim Poole
Christine Urban



2020-2021 HVAC Replacement Project

The long awaited project to replace the three rooftop HVAC units began in earnest the morning of November 5, 2020 with the arrival of the boom truck lifting the old units off the roof and the new units on. The PSUC Property team, with the assistance of Epp Siepmann Engineering Inc., had chosen Duncalfe Mechanical as our main contractor to renew the 27-year old Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems. The installation was to encounter a few unforeseen 'snags' along the way, resulting in unplanned work and an overall cost increase of \$11,331.67.

In conjunction with this very substantial undertaking, Faithful Footprints of the United Church of Canada (UCC) was contacted about an environmental grant. We were subsequently awarded a \$30,000.00 grant to help offset the costs.

Property was hopeful that the project would be completed during the summer or early fall months when the church was closed and the weather was agreeable. However, due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions here in Manitoba and indeed around the world, delays caused the replacement timeline for the project to stretch later and later into the year. Mother Nature, fortunately, gave us a break this year as the late fall and early winter weather proved to be unseasonably dry and mild.

The equipment, located on the flat roof portion of the church, consists of two smaller units and one large unit. They are Carrier HVAC's built at the Carrier plant in Monterrey, Mexico. They heat, ventilate and air condition the west side rooms including the Conly Chapel, the Narthex and of course, the Sanctuary. Carbon dioxide sensors are part of this new installation. These devices measure the CO and regulate the volume of outside air introduced depending on how many people are inside. This way, they are not heating (or cooling) outside air when no one is present, thus saving energy! New digital set-back thermostats regulate temperatures dependent on building use as well.

The old units, although built for the outdoors, were not only subject to Winnipeg's weather extremes for nearly 30 years, they were also, unfortunately, subject to abuse from the local squirrel population! Most people know that our red squirrels love chewing things even more than puppies love chewing slippers! The exposed rooftop ductwork was riddled with holes! The new ductwork is sheathed in aluminum, thereby preventing future rodent damage.

Property is confident these new HVAC systems will provide Prairie Spirit with years of economical, trouble-free service. The old system was getting increasingly unreliable and costly to maintain. We can now all breathe easier when the temperature drops to -30° and the winter winds are blowing.

The last of the invoices have now been received. The cost of the project was a whopping \$152,652.74! Thanks to that Faithful Footsteps grant plus GST rebates, PSUC will pay out \$119,245.31. Additionally, engineering support from Epp Siepman cost \$4,441.04. As you can guess, this has seriously depleted PSUC's Building Fund. We are actively looking for ways to build this fund back up. If you have any suggestions on how we can do that, please contact anyone on your Property team, the Oversight Council or call or email the office.

When we finally all gather back inside Prairie Spirit United Church; when we welcome one another with real handshakes and yes, even hugs... rest assured, the warmth of our greetings will be augmented, even just a bit, by those shiny new HVAC's.

Submitted by:
Dennis Bitton, chair



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE TEAM

Congregational Life Team Members

Heather MacMillan
(Team Lead)
Donna Little
Naomi McLeod
Martha Smith

Judy Restall
Sharon Fielding
Fran Ferguson
Marj Evason

Marianne Palmer
Shirley Hill
Lois Bilesky
Gwenda Matieshin

For immediate release
January 22, 2021

MKO Congratulates Dr. Stewart Hill, Doctor of Philosophy in Natural Resources and Environmental Management

Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Inc. is announcing that our staff member, **Stewart Hill**, was successful in completing his Doctor of Philosophy in Natural Resources and Environmental Management degree at the University of Manitoba today.

“It is my distinct honour to announce that our very own Senior Research and Policy Analyst, Stewart Hill, successfully defended his thesis today titled *The Autoethnography of an Inniniw from God’s Lake, Manitoba, Canada: First Nation Water Governance Flows from Sacred Indigenous Relationships, Responsibilities and Rights to Aski*,” stated **Grand Chief Garrison Settee**.

“Dr. Hill, who is from God’s Lake First Nation, has been on a long journey studying in his field. Today he has achieved his PhD,” said Grand Chief Settee. “We watched him present his research and defend his thesis today and his committee said he passed with flying colours. Dr. Hill makes us extremely proud as the first person to complete and achieve his PhD from his community of God’s Lake.”

“Today I’m very happy,” stated Dr. Stewart Hill. “It’s been a long road, a long journey, and it hasn’t always been easy but through hard work and determination, you persevere. As the Grand Chief said, hopefully it paves the way for many youth to be able to chase their dreams and accomplish them. Today I’m very happy, I’m elated! Thank you very much. I would like to acknowledge my advisors, Dr. Shirley Thompson of the University of Manitoba’s Natural Resources Institute and Dr. Annemieke Farenhorst of the Soil Sciences department of the U of M. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. David Lobb, Dr. Myrle Ballard and Dr. Ovide Mercredi. As well, thank you to my friends and family, especially to my wife, Aggie. I thank you all.”

“I presented a star blanket to Dr. Stewart Hill earlier today; he is our very own Cree warrior,” said Grand Chief Settee. “He completed his PhD studies solely through accessing scholarships and bursaries to complete his studies. Dr. Hill accomplished a tremendous feat today—this is a historic day and we ask you to join us in congratulating Stewart on being a role model for so many Indigenous people in Northern Manitoba and right across Turtle Island.”

SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAM

Social Justice Team Members

Linda Uhrich
(Team Lead)
Doris Orchyk

Val Goodridge
Sharon Thom
Marsha Jones

Chris Urban
Heather Friesen
(Mission Enthusiast)

Refugee Work

Prairie Spirit Church has been active in refugee work since 1979 when the Vietnam Refugees (Boat People) landed in Canada. All three churches over the years have been active with refugees before we became Prairie Spirit Church.

The Social Justice Team has, in its budget, money left over from last sponsorships. There is money in the Social Justice budget from sponsorships from the churches even after they were not in a sponsorship. Right now, we see it as our mission to help other churches by donating money to them when the going is tough for them to raise the money for sponsorships in their churches. We want to help people who need to come to a safe country such as Canada. Sometimes churches are short of members who can still be active with the refugees because of their age or for other reasons. Some will request help from us. We give thanks to congregation members who respond to my plea and are willing to work with the refugees even though they are being sponsored by another church.

Churches who have not sponsored before are taught how to begin their sponsorship. They also learn the policies of sponsorship in the United Church. I am the Manitoba Sponsorship Coordinator, and sit on the United Church National Advisory Committee. I serve on the Manitoba Sponsorship Agreement Holders group and have just begun my work with the Prairie to Pine, Manitoba, Northwest Conference.

If you would like to donate money to the Refugee fund, work with refugees or help in any way, you can speak to any member of the Social Justice Team and they will direct you.

Heather Friesen

SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS

The Seven Grandfather Teachings have always been a part of the Native American culture. Their roots date back to the beginning of time. These teachings impact our surroundings, along with providing guidance toward our actions to one another.

According to the story, long ago, a messenger sent to see how the Neshnabék were living, discovered that the Neshnabék were living their life in a negative way, which impacted their thoughts, decisions, and actions. Some had hate for others, displayed disrespectful actions, were afraid, told lies, and cheated. Others revealed pride or were full of shame. During his journey, the messenger came across a child. This child was chosen to be taught by the Seven Grandfathers to live a good life. He was taught the lessons of Love, Respect, Bravery, Truth, Honesty, Humility, and Wisdom.

Before departing from the Seven Grandfathers, they told him, “Each of these teachings must be used with the rest. You cannot have Wisdom without Love, Respect, Bravery, Honesty, Humility, and Truth. You cannot be Honest if you are only using one of the other teachings. To leave out one teaching would be embracing the opposite of what the teaching means.” The Seven Grandfathers each instructed the child with a principle. It was then up to the child to forget them, or to put them to use.

Each one of us represents the child. We must faithfully apply the teachings of our Seven Grandfathers to our own lives. We must place our trust in the Creator. We must also never forget to be sincere in our actions, character, and words.

The first Teaching is Love.



LOVE

Knowing love is to know peace.

Our love must be unconditional. When people are weak, that is when they need love the most. Love is a strong affection for another. This can form between friends and family. Love is an attachment based upon devotion, admiration, tenderness, and kindness for all things around you. For one to love and accept themselves is to live at peace with the Creator and in harmony with all of creation. Love knows no bounds. We must accept it sincerely and give it freely.

The Eagle represents Love due to its unique relationship with the Creator. Only the Eagle has the strength and ability to fly higher than all others placing it closer to the Creator than any other being. Eagles are loving parents and protect and guide their young.

Thoughts to ponder:

What does Love mean to you? Who and what do you love? Who and what don't you love?



**NOTTAWASEPPI HURON
BAND OF THE POTAWATOMI**

A FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL GOVERNMENT



Once again, this year, your Social Justice Team is coordinating a spring plant fundraiser with the folks from **Glenlea Greenhouses.**

We know you will be anxious to get started with your gardens and this is the perfect way to get the plants you want without standing in lines or going to crowded Greenhouses.

Starting **February 1st**, you will be able to order online. The website will be up and running later this week and we will provide you with a link once that's in place.

Order early to avoid disappointment. We urge you not to wait until the last days of the campaign in April to order and find out your favorite plants are sold out.

[Let's Start Thinking of Spring!](#)

In order to be more environmentally friendly, Glenlea has reduced their printed catalog down to a **four-page colour promotional flyer** which will highlight the important plant selections they offer. Starting in **early March** limited copies of these paper catalogs will be available at the church along with limited paper orders.

The full **16-page catalogue will still be produced but in digital form only.**

Important Fundraiser dates –

Feb 1st – start ordering online

Early March – paper catalogs available for pick up at the church

April 5th – paper orders due to the church

April 15th – deadline for online orders

May 19th – ordered plants delivered to Prairie Spirit United Church